Western Australian Football League

Annual Report

1908

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West Australian Football League.



ANNUAL REPORT

FOR THE

SEASON 1908.

Presented and Adopted at the Annual Meeting held at Perth, March 24, 1909.

PORTER & SALMON, PRINTERS, FREMANTLE.

WEST AUSTRALIAN

FOOTBALL LEAGUE.

SECRETARY'S ANNUAL REPORT.

SEASON 1908.

MR. PRESIDENT AND GENTLEMEN,—

It is always pleasing to present a report of progress to a body such as your League, but especially so when success has been recorded in the face of many difficulties. When the efforts and results which last season's records indicate are remembered, there is an especial pleasure to be found in the compilation of an official review.

AUSTRALASIAN JUBILEE CARNIVAL.

Undoubtedly the most important event which marked the last football year was the celebration of the jubilee of the Australian game by holding a Championship Carnival in Melbourne, where teams from all the States and New Zealand assembled to decide the championship of Australasia. In conjunction with the Goldfields League twenty-four players were chosen to do battle for this State, with the gratifying result that the combination won the position of "runners-up" in the series of matches, only suffering one defeat in four contests. Considering the smallness of population in this State and the consequent limitation to the number of players available, and also the fact that the team was comprised of men drawn from Clubs of two Leagues situated many miles apart, the result can only be regarded as most gratifying. The carnival's record stands as the most unique athletic event in the history of Australia, and may be said to have been a worthy commemoration of the foundation of the game. As a souvenir of the event, a handsomely-arranged enlargement of a series of photographs of the competing teams and officials associated with the celebrations has been presented to this body by the Australasian Council.

PREMIERSHIP CONTESTS.

Interest in the premiership contests was well maintained up to the middle of the season, though towards the latter end the standard of play was considerably lowered owing to the absence of several leading players in connection with the carnival. For the sixth time first honors were secured by the East Fremantle Club after a final contest with the Perth team. A feature of the season was the marked improvement shown by the Subiaco team, which placed to its credit the most successful year since its admission to the League Midland Junction also showed a continuance of the improved form which characterised it in 1907; taken altogether, it seems that the two combinations which have for several seasons been regarded as the weaker members give promise of developing in strength to such an extent as to place within their power the attainment of a place in the deciding "final four."

STATE CHAMPIONSHIP.

Another year has been allowed to pass without any competition between the first teams of the two Leagues for the State Championship. There are, however, indications that a suggestion will emanate from the Goldfields Football League to the effect that a contest between a selected eighteen from both bodies should be played annually alternately on the coast and goldfields.

GROUNDS DIFFICULTY.

The election of a new set of executive officials in connection with the W.A.C.A. Ground at Perth led to an offer of reasonable terms being made to the League. Under promise that certain improvements would be effected the embargo placed on the ground by your League in 1907 was removed, and premiership contests again played in the City. The annual argument with the Fremantle Council which has signalised the opening of the last four seasons was repeated, and again ended satisfactorily. After several years the impost charged for the use of grounds has been reduced from the exorbitant rate of 33⅓% hitherto in operation. While the last reduction was in every way a necessary one to expect, the extent of any further claims in this direction should be governed by a due recognition of the fact that the League, as a semi-public body, has a public duty to the public

which it meets by the payment of a reasonable percentage towards the upkeep of publicly owned grounds, the improvement of which is a public service.

NEW GROUNDS.

An additional evidence of the municipal progress of the State was given in the opening of a recreation ground at Subiaco, where League fixtures were played with results which, considering all the circumstances, must be regarded as being highly satisfactory. Again, with regret, the absence of an up-to-date publicly-owned City enclosure has to be referred to. Though boasting progressive development in all other matters of modern advancement, the capital is still at least thirty years behind even the minor cities of Australia in the matter of a properly-equipped athletic ground. While the W.A.C.A. Reserve, despite its many unalterable disadvantages, such as unsuitable situation, etc., has been of service to sporting bodies it cannot be said to meet even one-third of what is required by a progressive city. Even were it equal to all requirements there would still be ample room for two grounds within the city boundaries. A fitting recommendation to the incoming delegates would be one urging a vigorous campaign in the direction of securing the improvements necessary to make Loton Park an enclosure worthy of the City.

FINANCES.

As will be seen from the balance-sheet, the amount handled by the League totals £2108/2/1, being an excess of £722/8/9 over 1907, which is largely due to the revenue derived from the carnival benefit matches.

As showing the maintenance of public interest in the game, the following figures, which represent the gross gate receipts for each year during the last septennial period, are interesting :—

1902	..	..	..	£1308
1903	..	..	..	1424
1904	..	..	..	1605
1905	..	..	..	2260
1906	..	..	..	2333
1907	..	..	..	1887
1908	..	..	..	2469

(Shillings and pence omitted.)

The dividends paid to clubs show a relative increase, and are as follows :—

1902	..	..	£582
1903	..	..	653
1904	..	..	670
1905	..	..	972
1906	..	..	780
1907	..	..	664
1908	..	..	763

As will be seen in the foregoing, last year's figures indicate an improvement over those of the previous year The large discrepancy in the amounts collected at gates and the sums disbursed to clubs appears owing to the inclusion in the former table of the carnival test matches at Perth and Fremantle. As the increased gate receipts were mostly felt in the earlier stages of the season the four lower clubs show a much larger proportionate increase than those in the first four. The dividends of the latter were, within a few shillings, the same as for 1907, while the remaining clubs received the following increases, in round figures :—East Perth, £23 ; Midland Junction, £35 ; North Fremantle, £30 ; Subiaco, £23.

Another encouraging feature of the season under review is the decrease in non-paying matches by the weaker clubs ; in 1907 these numbered no less than 27, the average loss on which was 35/- per match ; in 1908 the number fell to 9 and the average loss to 32/3. This large numerical decrease indicates the increasing popularity of the weaker teams. While dealing with matters under finance, I desire to record the very valuable and loyal assistance rendered by your treasurer, Mr. J. Webb.

COUNTRY AND MINOR ASSOCIATIONS.

The following Associations were registered with this body during the year :—Albany, Beverley, Bunbury, Central Murchison, Collie, Eastern Districts, Goomalling, Great Southern Districts, Geraldton, Katanning, Murchison and Nelson. The services of your League were again largely availed of by the subordinate executives, and all reports seem to indicate sound progress. Although through a mutual misunderstanding of feeling relations with the West Australian Association were somewhat strained at the close of the 1907 season, last year the two bodies worked in complete harmony. Your League assisted the administrative department by a vote of six guineas, and also secured for Association teams the use of enclosed grounds, the revenues of which were collected and refunded by the officers of your League. In

referring to the West Australian Association appreciation should be expressed of the work performed on its behalf by the chairman (Mr. W. Price) and the hon. secretary (Mr. R. F. Marshall).

COLLEGE ASSOCIATION.

The three leading Colleges of the State again played the Australian game only, and an interesting series of matches resulted in the Christian Brothers' College annexing the championship pennant presented by your League.

JUNIOR ASSOCIATIONS.

Interest in the various junior grades was again well maintained throughout the season. At the beginning of the year provision was made on the annual estimates to present caps to the premier team in each Association, but owing to the following causes no monies were available from the funds set apart for the purpose :- (1) A new definition of the 5% deduction from gate receipts was agreed to subsequent to the estimates being adopted, and (2) the action of the Australasian Council in altering the 1906 resolutions regarding the Propagation Fund. In the ex-Scholars' and Commonwealth grades, which were established by your League, a most successful period was experienced. The results in these departments were due in the Commonwealth League to its Secretary, Mr. E D. Longson, on whose retirement Mr. R. R. Elsegood took over the duties. In the Perth Division of the ex-Scholars' section Mr. Arthur Coyne, the secretary, rendered splendid service, as did also Mr. W. A. Brown, who acted as secretary to the Fremantle Division. In the latter special reference should be made to the good influence of the chairman, Mr. H. L. Reilly, who has occupied the position for three consecutive years.

SCHOOLS FOOTBALL.

Another successful year in schools circles has to be recorded, for every State school within the metropolitan area nominated a team under Australian rules, and in only three institutions combinations under the rules of oversea codes existed. Much of last year's success was due to the efforts of Messrs. John Tucker, W. O. Shelton, G. D. Oliver, F. I, Bray, L. Boas and L. B Oates.

YOUNG AUSTRALIA LEAGUE.

The number of teams competing under this organisation numbered 26, as against 16 in 1905. A combined party of 42 lads made a tour of the Eastern Districts, where they

were accommodated and liberally entertained at Northam and Newcastle. This tour was conducted by the Young Australia League, and was the only one to which your body contributed, the amount being slightly over £2. A party of lads from the two towns referred to paid a reciprocal visit to the City and were for two days the guests of your League. The premiership medals, presented by your League, for the Perth Division were won by the Perth Boys' No. 1 team, while those for the Fremantle Division were secured by the Fremantle Boys' School. The latter also annexed the championship, which carried with it the Alcock trophy. The runners-up trophy of the Perth Division, a handsome cup presented by Mr. J. C. Taylor, who also supplemented his gift with 25 medals, fell to the Subiaco State School, while the "B" grade medals were obtained by the Newcastle Street School. The "B" grade premiership was won by the West Guildford School, but for the reasons set out under heading "Junior Association" it was impossible to provide the medals looked for.

PRESIDENTIAL.

The most pleasing function of the year was the very deserving recognition of services rendered the game by your President, Mr. R. G. O'Neill, who received at the hands of the delegates and officers a handsome presentation in appreciation of his four-years' occupancy of the chief office of the League.

APPEAL BOARD.

The re-election of Messrs. R. A. Sholl, F. Gill, M.L.A., and J. R. Bolt to constitute the Appeal Board met with general approval, and the thanks of the League are due to those gentlemen for their painstaking and conscientious attention to the duties required.

PLAYING COSTUMES.

A resolution prohibiting the use of any head-covering other than caps by players during contests was enforced in all matches and an improvement in the appearance of teams effected.

TEST MATCHES.

A feature of the season was the excellent exhibitions of football given by the combined test teams representing the Perth and Fremantle districts respectively. From a financial standpoint these fixtures were also successful, resulting in a

gross return to the League of £373. Considering the many directions in which the game is hampered for want of funds, the incoming delegates might consider the advisability of arranging similar contests annually, and to have a special League gold medal designed for presentation to each of the successful players.

ADMINISTRATION OF THE GAME.

The question of a more complete administration of the game cannot yet be said to have reached the stage of final settlement. In the schools something approaching perfection has been reached; also in the two next grades—ex-Scholars and Commonwealth Leagues. Between the latter and the senior grade there is a gap which should be bridged. At present the time of officers is fully taxed by the work involved in the existing departments, while the financial strain cannot be expected to stand any further burdens. The question is therefore one of the problems that cannot be solved without much careful consideration. During the year a conference was held between your League and the West Australian Association, and as the drafted proposals were almost unanimously rejected little good resulted.

BUSINESS TRANSACTED.

The season 1908, like its immediate predecessors, was also a very busy one for officers and delegates alike. As showing the increased financial importance of your body the figures for 1902 show that £932/1/8 was handled, while in 1908 the totals reached £2108/2/1. Another indication of the upward trend is given by the fact that in 1907 slightly over 200 cheques were issued, while in 1908 the issue of 300 was found necessary.

COUNTRY WEEK.

During the past season several applications for visits from combined country teams have been received, but no encouragement could be given. It seems that a proposal that should be given effect to is the idea of a Country Week. A carnival for the decision of what might be known as the Inland Championship of Western Australia should with careful organisation be made possible. Remembering that there are ten country Associations the scheme should be highly successful.

THE GAME IN AMERICA.

During the year advice was received from San Francisco to the effect that Mr. Chas. Lynam, an Australian, late of this State, has, as a result of overtures from the officers of your League, successfully attempted the introduction of the game in California. After two seasons' practice, Major Piexotto, the highest athletic official in the Pacific States, offered to bring 40 young Americans, from 11 to 19 years of age, to tour the Commonwealth and play against different grades here in the hope that the foundations of senior American versus Australian contests would thus be laid. After communicating with the Victorian League, Mr. C. M. Hickey, President of the Australasian Council, and Mr. L. A. Adamson, of the Wesley College, Melbourne, the Major was assured that accommodation would be found in Australia. Cabled advices from San Francisco indicate that the party will arrive in Sydney on June 16th and commence a tour of this continent. It seems that this development will mark the beginning of a new era in which international contests under Australian rules will be witnessed.

THANKS.

In conclusion, I desire to thank your President, Mr. R. G. O'Neill, and the delegates generally for the generous assistance received at their hands throughout the season. I also wish to specially thank Mr. F. I. Bray, who has been most consistent in his readiness to assist wherever the interests of the game required it, and who was also very largely responsible for the successful organisation and tour of the Jubilee Carnival Team. To Mr. E. Udy, who acted as secretary during my absence in the Eastern States, I am also deeply indebted.

CONCLUSION.

In conclusion, I desire to congratulate the delegates on the splendid results of their administration during the past year, and to express the hope that the successes of 1908 will find a repetition during the forthcoming season, already so full of promise for successful efforts and results.

J. J. SIMONS,
SECRETARY.

Adopted.
R. G. O'NEILL,
PRESIDENT.

Officers and Committees.

At the Annual Meeting of the League the following Officers and Committees were elected :—

President :
MR. R. G. O'NEILL.

Vice-Presidents :
MESSRS. H. W. MILLS AND P. G. McMAHON.

Treasurer :
MR. J. WEBB.

Appeal Board :
MESSRS. R. A. SHOLL, F. GILL, M.L.A., J. R. BOLT.

Auditors :
MESSRS. E. G. READ AND F. T. KNOX.

Finance Committee :
MESSRS. T. CECIL, R. H. McLEOD, P. G. McMAHON.

Permit and Umpire Committee ;
MESSRS. T. CECIL, P. G. McMAHON, A. S. McDONALD, W. RICHARDSON, A. A. MOFFAT, J. WEBB, H. W. MILLS, A. JAMIESON

Juniors and Schools Committee :
MESSRS. T. CECIL, R. H. McLEOD, A. S. McDONALD, W. R. CROSBIE, E. UDY, also the PRESIDENT, TREASURER, AND SECRETARY.

Secretary :
MR. J. J. SIMONS, PERTH (sufficient address).

THE GOVERNING BODY OF FOOTBALL IN WEST AUSTRALIA.

Officers, Clubs, etc., since 1891.

Year.	President.	Chairman.	Secretary.	Treasurer	Clubs.
1891	H. R. Dixson		Walter James		
1892	E Darlot	Walter James	C. Cutbush		Rovers, West Perth, East Perth, Fremantle (late Unions).
1893		Walter James	G. S. Cranstone, to Aug. 12 C. Cutbush		Rovers, West Perth, Fremantle.
1894		E. C. Prendergast	G. S. Cranstone		Do.
1895	A. J. Diamond	Walter James	Stanley Evans	Secretary	Rovers, West Perth, Imperials, Fremantle.
1896	T. O'Beirne	E. C. Prendergast	E. L. Wilson	Secretary	Rovers, West Perth, Imperials, Fremantle.

The Governing Body of Football in West Australia (*continued*).

Year.	President	Chairman.	Secretary.	Treasurer	Clubs.
1897	H. Doyle	E. C. Prendergast	H. J. Scott	Secretary	Rovers, West Perth, Imperials, Fremantle.
1898	H. Doyle	E. C. Prendergast	E. L. Wilson	S. Hussey	Rovers, West Perth, Fremantle, East Fremantle.
1899	R H. Barrett	E. C. Prendergast	E. L. Wilson	Secretary	Do.
1900	R. H. Barrett	C. H. Paulin	R. R. Thomas, to May 11 J. F. Dwyer	Secretary	West Perth, Perth, East Fremantle, Sth. Fremantle.
1901	R. H. Barrett	C. H. Paulin	J. F. Dwyer	Secretary	West Perth, Perth, East Fremantle, Sth. Fremantle, Nth. Fremantle, Subiaco.
1902	C. H. Pierce	W. Roche	J. F. Dwyer	Secretary	Do.
	PRESIDENT AND CHAIRMAN.		J. F. Dwyer, to Oct 15		
1903	W. Roche		E. Udy, end term	E. Udy	Do.

THE GOVERNING BODY OF FOOTBALL IN WEST AUSTRALIA.

Officers, Clubs, etc., since 1891.

Year.	President.	Chairman.	Secretary.	Treasurer	Clubs.
1891	H. R. Dixson		Walter James		
1892	E Darlot	Walter James	C. Cutbush		Rovers, West Perth, East Perth, Fremantle (late Unions).
1893		Walter James	G. S. Cranstone, to Aug. 12 C. Cutbush		Rovers, West Perth, Fremantle.
1894		E. C. Prendergast	G. S. Cranstone		Do.
1895	A. J. Diamond	Walter James	Stanley Evans	Secretary	Rovers, West Perth, Imperials, Fremantle.
1896	T. O'Beirne	E. C. Prendergast	E. L. Wilson	Secretary	Rovers, West Perth, Imperials, Fremantle.

The Governing Body of Football in West Australia (*continued*).

Year.	President	Chairman.	Secretary.	Treasurer	Clubs.
1897	H. Doyle	E. C. Prendergast	H. J. Scott	Secretary	Rovers, West Perth, Imperials, Fremantle.
1898	H. Doyle	E. C. Prendergast	E. L. Wilson	S. Hussey	Rovers, West Perth, Fremantle, East Fremantle.
1899	R H. Barrett	E. C. Prendergast	E. L. Wilson	Secretary	Do.
1900	R. H. Barrett	C. H. Paulin	R. R. Thomas, to May 11 J. F. Dwyer	Secretary	West Perth, Perth, East Fremantle, Sth. Fremantle.
1901	R. H. Barrett	C. H. Paulin	J. F. Dwyer	Secretary	West Perth, Perth, East Fremantle, Sth. Fremantle, Nth. Fremantle, Subiaco.
1902	C. H. Pierce	W. Roche	J. F. Dwyer	Secretary	Do.
	PRESIDENT AND CHAIRMAN.				
1903	W. Roche		J. F. Dwyer, to Oct 15 E. Udy, end term	E. Udy	Do.

The Governing Body of Football in West Australia *(continued)*.

Year.	President and Chairman.	Secretary.	Treasurer	Clubs.
1904	W. Roche, to Aug. 30 R. A. Sholl, to end of term	E. Udy, to April 10 J. F. Dwyer	E. Udy	West Perth, Perth, East Fremantle, Sth. Fremantle, Nth. Fremantle, Subiaco.
1905	R. A. Sholl, to July 19 R. G. O'Neill	J. F. Dwyer, to May 2, E. Udy, to May 10, J. J. Simons.	E. Udy	West Perth, Perth, East Fremantle, Sth. Fremantle, Nth. Fremantle, Subiaco, Midland Junction.
1906	R. G. O'Neill	J. J. Simons	E. Udy	East Fremantle, West Perth, Perth, North Fremantle, South Fremantle, Subiaco, Midland Junction, East Perth.
1907	R. G. O'Neill	J. J. Simons	E. Udy, to Aug. 22 J. Webb	Do.
1908	R. G. O'Neill	J. J. Simons	J. Webb	Do.
1909	R. G. O'Neill	J. J. Simons	J. Webb	Do.